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Fracking woes misguided, exec says

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HOUSTON, May 24 (UPI) -- The natural gas industry is to blame for concerns of hydraulic fracturing because of misconceptions of the dangers, an executive said from Houston.

David Blackmon, director of government affairs at El Paso Corp., told delegates at an energy conference in Houston that a University of Texas study on hydraulic fracturing was "dead on," the energy Web site Rigzone reports.

The study suggested any contamination stemming from hydraulic fracturing, a process used to coax natural gas out of shale deposits, is likely because of inadequate cementing jobs used during oil and gas drilling operations. Most of the reports of contamination, the study found, were tied to wastewater above ground and not hydraulic fracturing.

"The misinformation about fracking fluids is our fault because we have not educated the media about fracking fluids," said Blackmon.

The Environmental Protection Agency, in a draft report published last year, found an aquifer in Wyoming was found to contain compounds associated with hydraulic fracturing.

EPA analysis of deep monitoring wells in the Wyoming aquifer found levels of glycols and other synthetic chemicals associated with hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, fluid "well above" standards that are considered safe for drinking water.

In actual drinking water, however, the EPA said those chemicals were "generally below established health and safety standards."

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